

Inspiring entrepreneurs

Venia Mboози cultivates a plot established by the **CHANYANYA IRRIGATION PROJECT**, earning money to build a secure future for her family.

Venia lives in Zambia's Kafue District with her husband and seven children. She is a member of the Chanyanya Smallholders Cooperative Society. The Chanyanya Irrigation project pooled cooperative members' land to create an 148ha irrigated commercial farm and to provide 15ha of irrigated market gardens.

Chanyanya is vulnerable to periods of drought and flooding, affecting food crops. Venia says, "Before the project, there was famine and hunger in Chanyanya. We could not even grow enough to eat and so I had nothing to sell to earn an income. I used to fail to send my children to school.

Now, we are able to feed ourselves and I plan to make sure that my children reach college and higher education."

Reaching for her hosepipe, she says, "With water, I can grow vegetables all year

round. I particularly like sweet potato leaves because they are so easy to cook!" (The leaves wilt down quickly, like spinach).

Venia uses the money she earns from selling vegetables to provide her family with nutritious food and to pay her children's school fees. But she has not stopped there. "I have bought goats to rear and am also investing in houses. I own nine apartments so far. I rent them out to earn a regular income."

Venia is excited about the future. "With the expansion of the irrigation project, there will be more opportunities for our young people when they finish school. Gardening is profitable and they can work for themselves. It is better to work for yourself than for an employer."